THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): I, personally, and the Government, take every statement made by the hon. Leader of the Opposition seriously. We will certainly consider the suggestions that he has made. It goes without saying that always everything that the Leader of the Opposition says, we consider that seriously. We will consider and examine what he has asked us to do. If it is feasible or not feasible, who should do it, when it can be done. I cannot immediately respond and say, 'Here I am, I will react to the newspaper report or what is being broadcast'. We will consider that ...*(Interruptions)*...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Okay, now that matter is closed. That matter is over. Question no. 181. ...*(Interruptions)*... Now, it is over. ...*(Interruptions)*... Now, it is over, please. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: Can I say that the statement is placed on the Table of the House, or there is objection to that?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Yes, Sir. I have got the names. He is right.

Loans for self-employment schemes by Banks

*181. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY:#
SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD:

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that during the recent Conference of the State Ministers of Rural Development, Panchayati Raj and Public Works, it was highlighted that the Nationalised Banks were sitting tight on loan applications for self-employment schemes in rural areas and this was ampering the rural development;

(b) if so, Government's response thereto; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken in order to expedite the release of bank loans for self-employment projects in the rural sector?

#The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri P. Prabhakar Reddy.

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) to (c) A Statement is placed on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) Yes, Sir. During the recent Conference of the State Ministers of Rural Development, Panchayati Raj and Public Works convened by Ministry of Rural Development on 27-28 January, 2003, some participants did raise the issue of delays in sanction, gap between the sanction and disbursal of loans and high rate of rejection of loan proposals by Banks under the Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY).

(b) and (c) Government and Reserve Bank of India (RBI) constantly review, monitor and evaluate the progress under the SGSY scheme. The performance of the Banks in regard to sanction and disbursement under the SGSY is also critically reviewed in different fora such as District Level Review Committee (DLRC) and the State Level Bankers Committee (SLBC) etc., where besides the representatives of RBI, implementing Banks, representatives from concerned State Govt. Departments participate. In addition, the progress of implementation of the scheme is also reviewed by a Monitoring Cell under the chairmanship of Deputy Governor in RBI. The major factors leading to delays in sanction/disbursement of loans are as follows:

(i) Non-sponsoring of viable loan applications;

(ii) Lack of necessary infrastructure and backward/forward linkage such as marketing of produced goods, etc.;

(iii) procedural delays relating to documentation;

(iv) delay in allotment of shed, power connection, water supply; etc.; and

(v) poor recovery position.

The RBI has been advising Banks periodically for further streamlining the financing. In its recent circular of 4 July 2002, it has advised the Banks to settle pending applications within the prescribed time-limit of 15 days, to reduce the period between loan sanction and disbursement, ensure greater coordination of work at the block level between bankers and Government functionaries, avoid under-financing, ensure participation in block and district level meetings and make all efforts to improve recoveries under the scheme.

SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Madam, one of the priorities of the Government is employement generation and one of the main sources of employment is self-employment. I would like to know from he hon. Minister what is the performance of the Nationalised Banks in extending rural credit. There are a lot of complaints about delay in sanctioning of loans. Even where laons are sanctioned, there is delay in the release of the loans. I would like to know from the hon. Minister what action the Government is initiating.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: There is, as the hon. Member knows and as all the hon. Members know, the Sampoorna Gramin Swarozgar Yojana which is really an amalgam of a number of schemes which earlier existed under various heads. I am sure, you know what those schemes were. If you like, I can also read out all those schemes, but now they have been amalgamated and made SGSY. The hon. Member has asked if the Government is satisfied with the performance of this scheme or the lending by Banks under the schemes. No. Sir, I am not satisfied; the Government is not satisfied. The second part of what you asked was: Have the Banks been providing sufficient credit under this scheme? I am not satisfied with the credit that has been provided under this scheme. These are really my immediate reactions to the questions that you asked. If you ask other questions, I will provide answers.

SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Madam, my second supplementary is very important. I have statistics with me. The Scheduled Commercial Banks in the country have closed down nearly 3,00 branches in the last 9 or 10 years. I have figures with me. In the year 1993, there were 35,389 branches. The number became 32,394 in the year 2002. The irony is, Madam, that the overall branches have increased in the said period. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: No ironic question, please.

SRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: This is related to the question. Sir, When the rural Banks have been closed, how is the credit made accessible to the rural public? That is a very important question. Why rural branches are being closed down, when overall branches are increasing? This is my question.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: Madam, it is linked with the Swarozgar Yojana, but not directly. You could stress the point and say that the rural

Banks have been closed down. We have to address ourselves to the question of why our commercial Banks, whether rural or urban, are not lending to Swarozgar Yojana. The Banks are hesitant to extend credit to projects or yojanas because they, in banking terms, are not finding them viable. The loans are not very high. It is up to Rs. 50,000. What is, however, proven a great success and I have referred to it, are the Self-Help Group Schemes. It is our experience that if this Swarozgar Yojana is serviced through a self-help group mechanism, the Banks are readily providing the credit. So, the answer is not to throw the total Scheme out, but really to modify it and to refine it in such a fashion that it works. It is our experience that it worked where the mechanism is of self-help groups. I can cite examples of the two States which are doing exceptionally well in this regard. They are Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. In the Self-Help Group Scheme of micro-credit, these two States have commandeered almost 90 per cent of the credit. Rupees six hundred crores credit were extended last year. It is also a mechanism for women empowerment. The Government and I personally are fully committed to it. We will not abandon the Scheme. We do want the faults and flaws to be rectified. One of the methods is really the creation of a group mechanism. This is the answer.

SHRIMATI SHABANA AZMI: Madam, when we visited some areas recently, as Members of the Standing Committee on Urban and Rural Development, it was brought to our notice that the State Bank of India had refused to give even a small loan of Rs. 5,000 for a sewing machine because the Bank claimed that the applicant was living in an illegal residence. How does her residential status make any difference for the Banks?

Secondly, you have yourself said, Sir, that this was a tool for women empowerment. in fact, women like her may be given priority and it is definitely something that will improve her status in the family because she is the person who receives this tool. As you have stated in the answer, the procedural delays have been found to be one of the greatest roadlocks. What we discovered was that most of the people in the rural areas did not have the ability to fill-up the forms, according to the requirements. So, what efforts is the Government making? I understand that this Self-Help Group is very important. The Self-Help Groups have some mechanism by which they can, at least, fill-up the forms which the individuals cannot do. What action is being taken by the Governement to empower them so that, at least, their applications are not rejected on the basis of incomplete forms?

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: Madam, I, in fact, sympathise totally with the objective that we wished to achieve. The difficulty that we face, and I would request the hon. Members to recognise the reality of the difficulty, is that I can't alter the banking norms which we subject the banks to adopt. I can't tell the banks, "You take shortcuts in the norms". This is not a shortcut for empowerment of women. The paper work involved, whether it is a loan of Rs. 5,000 or Rs. 4 crores, this is the system. The paper work involved is almost exactly the same. Therefore, under our banking system, if a bank manager turns around and says, "the paper work involved is such that if it is not filled up, I am well within my right to refuse the loan". It becomes difficult to say, "No, you make an exception in the case of A, B or C". This is the real difficulty. That is why we found the Self-Help Groups really the answer. If it is a group mechanism, the group enables and does all the rest. As you have said, Madam, individual applicants find it difficult to fill up the loan application. The group does it. The group services the loan. The group, in fact, ensures that the payment is made as also services the repayment in proper time. We are encouraging group mechanism in this regard. I don't want to really reduce it to the level of only statistics to say that this category of women got more or less. The difficulty remains and we are making efforts to improve the situation. That is all I have to say.

SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Madam, I thank you for giving me the opportunity. The hon. Finance Minister is aware of the fact that the loans to these uneducated and educated youths are denied on the ground that sureties and securities are not offered. The poor people, the middle-class people, are not in a position to offer sureties or securities. You know that the Reserve Bank of India has laid down the rules saying that upto a certain limit, no surety or security is required. As far as the self-employment programmes are concerned, in case of loans upto Rs. 50,000 given to educated self-employed, no surety or security is required. Have you changed the norms? Are your bank people demanding the sureties and securities? Even in the case of DRIs, no surety or security is required upto Rs. 5,000. Leave alone the differential rate of interest, no loan is given. You are well aware of that fact. Why is this being done? What action are you taking? Are you personally monitoring all these lacunae or deficiencies? And will you come up with comprehensive guidelines for the banking sector?

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: There are three or four question. The hon. Member asked whether the Government has revised the rules or the norms. No, we have not revised the norms. He further asked whether the Government is trying to improve it. The answer is, yes, we will try and constantly try to improve it so that the intended aim of the scheme is achieved. The hon. Member has some personal knowledge of banking operations also. Earlier, he was a Minister of State in the Finance Ministry and he also devised loan melas while handling that charge. So, he is familiar with all the difficulties. I have no difficulty in assuring the hon. Member that we are committed to this scheme and we will constanly try to improve it.

श्री गया सिंह: मैडम, मैं आपके माध्यम से मंत्री जी से यह जानना चाहता हूं ...(**व्यवधान**)...

श्रीमती सरोज दुबे: मैडम, महिलाओं के लिए अलग से....(**व्यवधान**)....

उपसभापति: जब आपका समय आएगा तब आप महिलाओं के लिए पूछ लीजिएगा।

श्री गया सिंह: ग्रामीण बैंकों में ये जितनी भी स्कीमें हैं, इनमें करप्शन बहुत है। मैं आपसे सिर्फ यह जानना चाहता हूं कि क्या आप करप्शन को रोकने के लिए कुछ इम्प्रूवमेंट करेंगे। करप्शन को रोकने के लिए क्या कोई टाइम बाउन्ड प्रोग्राम है क्योंकि लोन लेने के लिये लोग एक-एक, दो-दो साल तक दौड़ते रहते हैं? बैंक का मैनेजर अपना कमीशन घटाता, बढ़ाता रहता है। क्या आप इसके लिए कोई ऐसा रूल बनाएंगे कि एप्लीकेशन प्राप्त होने के एक महीने के अंदर लोन उसको मिलेगा यदि नहीं मिलेगा तो उसको रिजेक्ट करेंगे? अगर ऐसी कोई योजना बनाएंगे तो कुछ करप्शन घट सकता है।

श्री जसवंत सिंह: माननीय सदस्य ने यह जानना चाहा है कि भ्रष्टाचार के उन्मूलन के लिए क्या हम कोई योजना बनाएंगे? उसके समूल उन्मूलन के लिए अभी हमारे पास कोई योजना तो नहीं है। यह तो एक वातावरण का प्रश्न है। जैसे-जैसे देश में वातावरण होगा, वैसे-वैसे इसमें कमी आएगी। दूसरा माननीय सदस्य ने जानना चाहा है कि बैंकों से ऋण देने में लोगों को तंग किया जाता है, विशेषकर महिलाओं को। उनको यह सुविधा मिलती नहीं है। आपने यही प्रश्न पूछा है कि यह समयबद्ध होगा तो इसमें भ्रष्टाचार भी कम होगा और सुविधा भी बढ़ेगी। माननीय सदस्य जानते हैं कि अभी अपने आप में समयबद्ध, आज के नियमों में निहित है। वह समयबद्ध तो है।

श्रीमती सरला माहेश्वरी: उपसभापति महोदया, माननीय मंत्री जी ने जब अपना बजट रखा था, तब आपने कहा था कि जेंडर पर्सपेक्टिव पहली बार आया है। मैं मंत्री महोदय से यह जानना

चाहती हूं कि कि हाल ही में नेशनल सैम्पल सर्वे के अध्ययन से यह पता चलता है कि ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों में स्वरोजगार में कमी आई है। यह स्वरोजगार में कमी महिला और पुरुष दोनों के संदर्भ में है। महोदया, माननीय मंत्री महोदय इस बात को स्वीकार रहे हैं और इस बात को प्रचारित किया जा रहा है कि स्वरोजगार ही नियमित रोजगार का एक वैकल्पिक साधन है। खासकर SHGs, सैल्फहैल्प ग्रुप्स को महिलाओं के इम्पावरमेंट के चैलन्ज के रूप में देखा जा रहा है। मैं मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहती हूं कि अगर ऐसा है तो क्या आपने कभी अध्ययन किया है कि कितने सैल्फ हैल्प ग्रुप्स महिलाओं द्वारा संचालित हैं? महिलाओं द्वारा संचालित सैल्फ हैल्प ग्रुप्स को कितना ऋण दिया गया है? इस ऋण को देने के बाद जो स्कीमें चलाई गई हैं उनके अंतर्गत महिलाएं कितनी लाभान्वित हुई हैं? इन योजनाओं का मूल्यांकन करने के लिये श्री के॰ सी॰ पंत साहब की अध्यक्षता में टास्क फोर्स गठित की गयी थी। उन्होंने कहा था कि सरकार का जेंडर परसपेक्टिव हमारे सामने आए, इसके लिए जरूरी है कि एक इंटर मिनिस्टिरियल कमेटी गठित हो। मैं जानना चाहती हूं कि इस संदर्भ में आपने अभी तक क्या किया है?

श्री जसवंत सिंह: माननीय सदस्या ने प्रश्नों की झड़ी लगा दी है।

श्रीमती सरोज दुबे: आप उत्तरों की झड़ी लगा दीजिए।

श्री जसवंत सिंह: एक छोर से शुरू करता हूं। माननीय सदस्या ने पूछा है कि क्या इस पर विचार करने के लिए हम किसी कमेटी का गठन करेंगे, तो यह एक अच्छा सुझाव है और हम इस पर विचार करेंगे। कमेटियों के गठन से कोई समाधान निकलता हो, यह अपने आप में आवश्यक नहीं है। महिला एम्पावरमेंट की बात है। अगर सरल तरीके से ऋण मिलेगा और महिलाएं स्वरोजगार के आधार पर अपने पांवों पर खड़ी हो सकेंगी तो अच्छा होगा। इस एम्पावरमेंट के तहत महिलाओं को, विशेषकर ग्रामीण और छोटे तबके की महिलाओं को लाभ होगा। इसमें स्वाभिमान का ध्यान भी रहता है। हम इसके लिए कटिबद्ध हैं। माननीय सदस्या ने पूछा है कि क्या इसके बारे में अध्ययन किया गया है तो मैं बता दूं कि यह निरन्तर होता है। असेसमेन्ट के बारे में निरन्तर अध्ययन होता है। यह बैंकों द्वारा भी होता है....(**व्यवधान**)....

उपसभापति: ऑडिट ऑफ स्कीम्स है....(**व्यवधान**).... वे जवाब दे रहे हैं।

श्री जसवंत सिंह: यह निरन्तर होता है। मेरे पास आंकड़े हैं। कितना दिया है, कितना नहीं आया है, सभी राज्यों के सब आंकड़े मेरे पास हैं। मैं इन्हें माननीय सदस्या को भिजवा दूंगा। अगर अभी यहां पर बताता हूं तो सारा समय उसी में चला जाएगा।

उपसभापति: लालू जी। लालू जी भूल गए हैं कि आपने क्वेश्चन मांगा था। अगर नहीं मांगा था तो मैं दूसरों को दे देती हूं।

श्री लालू प्रसाद: उपसभापति महोदया, मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहता हूं कि क्या रिजर्व बैंक और भारत सरकार के वित्त मंत्रालय की यह नीति नहीं है कि क्रेडिट डिपोजिट रेशो मेन्टेन किया जाए? जिस राज्य में बैंक क्रेडिट करता है वह उस रेशो में खर्च नहीं होता। बिहार जैसे राज्य में हम अपनी बचत का ज्यादा क्रेडिट करते हैं। उस रेशों में कई बार माननीय मनमोहन सिंह जी, जब वे वित्त मंत्री थे, इनके बाद जितने भी वित्त मंत्री हुए और जनार्दन रेड्डी जी की स्टैण्डिंग कमेटी भी पटना में गई थी, मैं कहना चाहता हूं कि बिहार के प्रति बैंकों की भेदभावपूर्ण नीति और रिजर्व बैंक के उदासीन रवैया रहता है। प्रधानमंत्री जी लालकिले से घोषणा करते हैं कि बेरोजगारों को काम दिया जाएगा, लोन दिया जाएगा। लाखों बेरोजगार युवक, युवतियां....(**व्यवधान**)....

उपसभापति: लालू जी, सवाल कर लीजिए। प्रधानमंत्री जी ने जो कहा, वह अलग सवाल है।

श्री लालू प्रसाद: मैं सवाल पर ही आ रहा हूं। स्वरोजगार के लिए राज्य का जो डिपोजिट है उस रेशो के बारे में मैं जानना चाहता हूं। बिहार का जो डिपोजिट है, उस रेशो में आप देश भर के बैंकों के साथ समीक्षा करते होंगे कि बिहार के ग्रामीण विकास के लिए, बेरोजगारों को काम देने के लिए क्या इनवेस्टमेंट किया गया है। यदि कोई बैंक आपके कानून का उल्लंघन करता है तो क्या राज्य सरकारों को यह छूट नहीं होगी कि इन बैंकों से अपने डिपोजिट निकालकर कोपरेटिव बैंकों में जमा करें? बैंकों का यह जो रवैया है वह बिल्कुल गांव विरोधी है, बेरोजगार विरोधी है और किसान विरोधी है। लोग चक्कर काटते रहते हैं और सरकार कहती रहती है कि हमने विकास के लिए इतना पैसा दिया है, आप लोन ले लीजिए। हम बैंकों से ले रहे हैं। आप सच बताइए कि आपकी नीति क्या है? बिहार के साथ इतना भेदभाव क्यों हो रहा है? हमारे डिपोजिट के साथ हो रहा है।

उपसभापति: आप बैठेंगे तो जवाब देंगे कि ऐसा क्यों हो रहा है।

श्री जसवंत सिंह: उपसभापति जी, वैसे माननीय सदस्य का स्वरोजगार योजना सवाल बिहार संबंधी क्रेडिट डिपोजिट रेशो से सीधे जुड़ा हुआ नहीं है। और माननीय सदस्य ने कुशलता से उसे जोड़ने का प्रयत्न किया है। एक तो मैं आपको आश्वासन दे दूं कि हमारे मंत्रालय में बिहार के प्रति किसी प्रकार की न तो कोई दुर्भावना है और न ही हम किसी प्रकार का कोई भेदभाव करके चलेंगे। यह मैं सदन में आपको आश्वस्त कर रहा हूं। जबसे हमको यह नौकरी मिली है, तब से हमने जो कुछ आपके बिहार के बकाया थे वे नहीं रखे। फिर आपके प्रश्न में इतनी बारीकी है कि हमको चश्मा भी लगाना पड़ रहा है। आपने स्व-रोजगार के बारे में जानना चाहा है, मैं आपको बता दूं कि वैसे एप्लीकेशन बिहार के सब से ज्यादा हैं। जो आप कह रहे हैं कि बिहार के साथ उपेक्षा हुई तो यह बिल्कुल गलत है। बिहार के एक लाख 80 हजार से ऊपर एप्लीकेशन स्पोंसर हुए। इतने अन्य किसी राज्य के नहीं थे। जो सैंक्शन हुए वे 52 हजार के करीब हैं। इसी तरह उसके अनुपात में अधिक सैंक्शन होने चाहिए, यह कठिनाई मुझे मोटे रूप में मिलती है। सैंक्शन होने के बाद लोन डिस्बर्स भी हुए हैं परन्तु जितने प्रतिशत लोन डिसबर्समेंट हुआ है, वह संतोषजनक नहीं है, यह मैं मानता हूं।

लेकिन वह तो समूचे भारत में संतोषजनक नहीं है। यह जो स्कीम है उसमें यह संतोषजनक नहीं है। तब क्या इसका अर्थ हम यह लेकर चलें कि इस स्कीम को ही नकार देना चाहिए। यह ठीक नहीं है। स्कीम तो अच्छी है, लेकिन इस स्कीम की जो कमियां हैं, अगर उन्हें दूर करके स्कीम चलाई जाए तो मेरा विश्वास है कि निश्चित रूप से इसका लाभ होगा, जैसे आन्ध्र प्रदेश और तमिलनाडु में इस स्कीम और सैल्फ हैल्प ग्रुप्स के तहत उठाया जा रहा है। अन्य राज्य भी उठाएं तो मेरा विश्वास है कि वह जरूर होगा, ऐसा हम सोचते हैं।

Amount received through Hawala Channel

*182. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have estimated the amount received through Hawala Channel in the country during the last three years, year-wise;

(b) whether Government propose to bring about changes in the Foreign Contributions Regulations Act, to monitor and control such receipts; and

(c) if so, what are details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) "Hawala" refers to illegal transfer of money through unofficial channels. In the very nature of such transactions which are all clandestine, any estimates of such dealings cannot be made with any accuracy.

(b) and (c) The Foreign Contribution (Regulations) Act (FCRA), 1976 regulates, *inter alia*, the receipt and utilisation of foreign contributions. There is no connection between "Hawala" transactions and transactions regulated by the FCRA.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: Madam, the "hawala" refers to illegal transaction of money through unofficial channels. In a very nature of such transactions, which are all chandestine, any estimates of such dealing cannot be made with any accuracy. The hon. Member wanted to know what is our estimate of hawala dealings. If we had the estimate, I would have moved two steps towards eradicating it.

As far as (b) and (c) parts of his question are concerned, they are totally unrelated. The Foreign Contribution (Regulations) Act (FCRA) regulates the receipt and utilisation of foreign contributions. There is no